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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR ISSUES FINAL SALE NOTICE
FOR MARYLAND OFFSHORE 'WIND ENERGY AREA'**

Completion of the Final regulatory step starts countdown to auction of area off Maryland's coast for development of wind energy projects.

ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 30, 2014) - Today, the U.S. Dept. of Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) issued the Final Sale Notice for Maryland's offshore Wind Energy Area (WEA) -- the last required regulatory step before BOEM can auction the lease areas within the offshore wind development WEA.

Governor O'Malley praised the declaration, stating, "Today's announcement of the Final Sale Notice for the Maryland Wind Energy Area represents a tremendous milestone in moving the U.S. offshore wind industry forward and is a testament to what Federal agencies and State governments can achieve by bringing together diverse stakeholders to tackle big challenges."

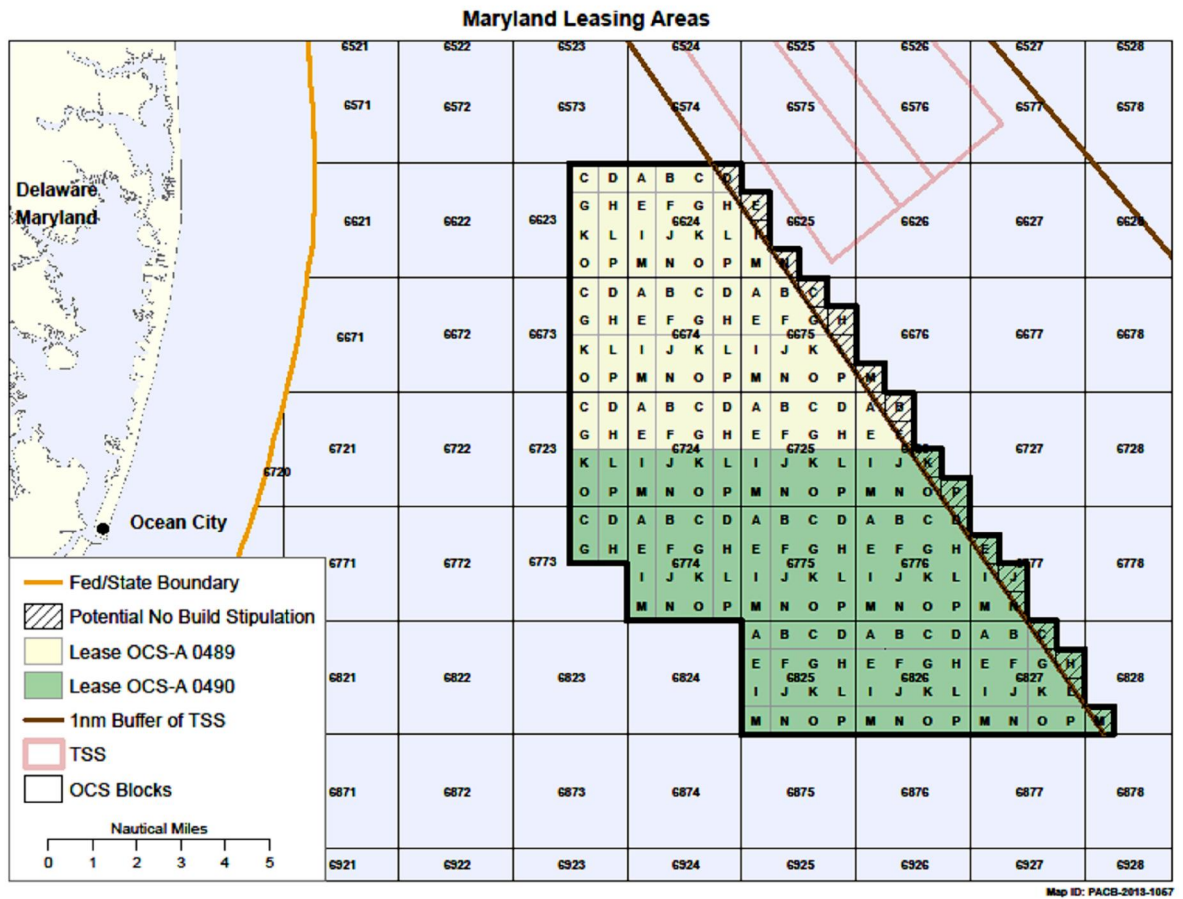
The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) has worked to define the Maryland WEA with BOEM, and other state agencies through an intergovernmental State/Federal Task Force since 2010. Today's notice represents the culmination of years of comprehensive marine spatial planning work with maritime stakeholders, coastal communities, academic institutions, and Maryland businesses. This collaboration will ensure that offshore wind energy can be developed in harmony with the environment and other users of the oceans.

The Maryland WEA covers approximately 94 square nautical miles of ocean beginning 10 nautical miles (approx. 11.5 miles) off the shores of Ocean City, Maryland. The area is further subdivided into northern and southern lease areas in order to ensure efficient use of the available area and support competition. BOEM has solicited input from developers and the public regarding this area through a Call for Interest and Nominations, and in December of 2013 in a Proposed Sale Notice.

MEA and other Maryland agencies have invested significant resources in atmospheric, ecological, and geophysical surveys of the WEA, making it the most closely studied area of the Outer Continental Shelf under consideration for offshore wind development. Major surveys of marine mammals and other wildlife in the area are continuing to ensure that offshore wind projects can be developed without impacting the marine environment.

For more information about this initiative, please visit: <http://www.boem.gov/State-Activities-Maryland/>

The mission of the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) is to promote affordable, reliable, clean energy. MEA's programs and policies help lower energy bills, fuel the creation of green collar jobs, address environmental and climate impacts, and promote energy independence.



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